

Regular Town Council Meeting

Theodore D. Washington Municipal Building, Henry “Emmett” McCracken Jr. Council Chambers, 20
Bridge Street, Bluffton, SC

August 13, 2024

This meeting can be viewed live on [BCTV](#), on Hargray Channel 9 and 113 or on Spectrum Channel 1304.

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Toomer called the meeting to order at 5:00 PM.

II. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Mayor Toomer.

III. INVOCATION

The Invocation was given by Councilmember Frazier.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE MINUTES

1. Regular Meeting Minutes of 07/09/2024

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier, Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore to approve the Regular Meeting Minutes of 07/09/2024 as submitted.

2. Quarterly CIP Workshop Meeting Minutes 07/16/2024

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton, Seconded by Councilmember Burden to approve the Quarterly CIP Workshop Meeting Minutes of 07/16/2024 as submitted.

V. PRESENTATIONS, CELEBRATIONS, AND RECOGNITIONS

1. USCB Sand Shark Welcome Week Proclamation - Mayor Larry Toomer

Mayor Toomer, on behalf of Town Council, presented the USCB Sand Shark Week Proclamation to student body president, Emma Osment and Student Body Treasurer, Lacey Mueller.

2. Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission Presentation - James Williams, Executive Director

James Williams, the Executive Director of Beaufort Jasper Economic Opportunity Commission, presented a brief overview of the programs and services that serve the 18% of Bluffton residents who live within or below the poverty guidelines. They partner with other non-profit programs and local municipalities in addition to state funding to provide valuable resources to the most vulnerable residents. HeadStart and Early HeadStart are two of their programs with 600 children enrolled and over 1,000 on the wait list. Mr. Williams requested future partnerships with the Town of Bluffton.

VI. PUBLIC COMMENT

Michael Camp 781 Corn Planters Ct. S. - Mr. Camp spoke regarding the flooding at the Farm at Buckwalter and related concerns.

Kerry Iams 779 Corn Planters Ct. S. - Ms. Iams referenced her tenure serving on the HOA Board, the infrastructure and drainage at the Farm.

Richard Evans 57 Fording Ct. - Mr. Evans discussed concerns regarding the clearing of trees, standing water, and debris on the construction site along the Bluffton Parkway near the Hampton Lake subdivision.

Doug Porter 67 Fording Court - Mr. Porter relayed his concerns regarding the construction site along the Bluffton Parkway near the Hampton Lake subdivision.

Sharon Brown 163 Buck Island Road - Ms. Brown discussed several items that within the Buck Island community regarding code enforcement.

Doug Magill 21 Palmetto Cove Ct. - Mr. Magill spoke regarding the development and over clearing of the parcel along the Bluffton Parkway and the gated entrance of Hampton Lake. He posed possible involvement from Council about statements made at a previous Planning Commission meeting and to mitigate the issues that are being experienced.

Jodie Evans 57 Fording Ct - Mrs. Evans discussed concerns regarding the clearing of trees, standing water, and debris on the construction site along the Bluffton Parkway near the Hampton Lake subdivision.

VII. COMMUNICATIONS FROM MAYOR AND COUNCIL

Councilmember Burden - Thanked Kim Washok-Jones and Bill Baugher for the presentation to address storm water concerns within the community after the impact of Tropical Storm Debby. She thanked the community members for sharing their concerns and information during Public Comment. Burden then expressed her gratitude to the Police and Public Works department for their work during the storm.

Councilmember Hamilton - Addressed Stephen regarding statements made by Ms. Sharon Brown during Public Comment requesting any information available to be discussed at a later date.

Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood - Discussed his empathy for residents of the Farm. He spoke regarding the design standards 25 years ago and the need for action moving forward with public-private partnerships to address the issues.

Councilmember Frazier - Expressed her gratitude to Public Works for their efforts during Tropic Storm Debby. She was very pleased with the Back-to-School event that provided 618 students with backpacks of school supplies. Frazier concluded with concerns the community is facing and the collaborative efforts between the Town of Bluffton and private partnerships.

Mayor Toomer discussed Tropical Storm Debby, the involvement of town crews and discussed the storm impact advising the May River, thankfully, did not play a part in the storm.

VIII. FORMAL AGENDA ITEMS

1. Consideration of an Ordinance to Amend the Town of Bluffton Code of Ordinances, Chapter 13 – Public Property, Article 2 – Public Park, Dock and Boat Landing Rules as it Relates to New Town Parks and Facilities. Second and Final Reading - Heather Colin, Assistant Town Manager

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier, Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the second and final reading of the ordinance with two changes from the first reading, 1) Being the removal of the noise ordinance to be re-evaluated and 2) Changing the opening time of the Oscar Frazier Splash Pad from 11:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Town Council unanimously approved the second and final reading of this ordinance.

2. Consideration of an Ordinance Authorizing the Conveyance of Certain Real Property Owned by the Town of Bluffton to Beaufort County, Located Adjacent to 140 Buck Island Road and Consisting of 0.072 Acres, More or Less, and Identified as a Portion of Beaufort County Tax Map No. R610 031 000 0003 0000; and Authorizing the Execution and Recording of Associated Documents. Second and Final Reading - Stephen Steese, Town Manager

Motion made by Councilmember Burden, Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the second reading of an Ordinance authorizing the conveyance of certain real property owned by the Town of Bluffton to Beaufort County, located adjacent to 140 Buck Island Road and consisting of 0.072 Acres, more or less, and identified as a portion of Beaufort County Tax Map No. R610 031 000 0003 0000; and authorizing the execution and recording of associated documents.

Town Council unanimously approved the second and final reading of this ordinance.

3. Consideration of Ordinances for that Certain Property Owned by Bryant Holding, LLC, Consisting of 2.14 Acres, More or Less, Located at 30 Davis Road located to the east of the Intersection of Davis Road and Okatie Highway (SC Highway 170) and identified by Beaufort County Tax Map No. R600-029-000-0028-0000. First Reading - Kevin Icard, Director of Growth Management

For the Following Applications:

- A. Consideration of an Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to Amend the Said Property's Future Land Use Designation from Suburban Living to Lifestyle Housing;

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood, Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Amendment to the Town of Bluffton Comprehensive Plan "Blueprint Bluffton" to Amend the Said Property's Future Land Use Designation from Suburban Living to Lifestyle Housing.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this amendment.

- B. Consideration of 100% Annexation Request to Annex the Subject Property into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits; and

A motion made by Councilmember Hamilton, Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the 100% Annexation Request to Annex the Subject Property into the Town of Bluffton Corporate Limits.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this request.

- C. Consideration of a Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone the Subject Property to the Residential General (RG) District.

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to approve the Zoning Map Amendment to Rezone the Subject Property to the Residential General (RG) District.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this amendment.

4. Consideration of an Ordinance Authorizing an Economic Development Incentive Agreement Between the Town of Bluffton and Reed Commercial Partners. First Reading - Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager
 - A. Raider Drive Commercial Flex Building of Approximately Ten Thousand (10,000) Square Feet.

A motion made by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood, Seconded by Councilmember Hamilton to Approve the Raider Drive Commercial Flex Building of Approximately Ten Thousand (10,000) Square Feet with a completion date of December 2025.

Town Council unanimously approved this ordinance.
 - B. Parkway Offices at Hampton Lakes Consisting of Three (3) Buildings Totaling Approximately Twenty-Eight Thousand (28,000) Square Feet.

A motion made by Councilmember Burden; Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood to Approve Parkway Offices at Hampton Lakes Consisting of Three (3) Buildings Totaling Approximately Twenty-Eight Thousand (28,000) Square Feet with a completion date of December 2025.

Town Council unanimously approved the first reading of this ordinance.
5. Approval to Authorize a Contract Amendment to the Master Agreement for the Development of Commercial Property within the Buckwalter Multi County Industrial Park (Fiscal Impact \$625,000.). Chris Forster, Assistant Town Manager

A motion made by Councilmember Frazier; Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood to Approve Contract Amendment to the Master Agreement for the Development of Commercial Property within the Buckwalter Multi County Industrial Park (Fiscal Impact \$625,000.).

Town Council unanimously approved this ordinance.

IX. CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS

A motion by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Councilmember Frazier to approve the Consent Agenda after discussion from Police Chief Babkiewicz. The discussion regarded the need for additional School Resource Officers (SRO) in some of the larger schools, May River High School, for example. Babkiewicz discussed the state policy that no additional grant funding will be provided until all SRO positions within the state of South Carolina are filled. As a temporary solution, at the recommendation of Bluffton Police Department, Dr. Frank Rodriguez, Beaufort County School superintendent, has hired a security guard for the front doors at May River High until another SRO can be hired to meet the need.

Town Council unanimously approved the consent agenda.

1. Monthly Department Reports: Police, Finance and Administration, Human Resources, Municipal Court, Projects & Watershed Resilience, Public Services, Don Ryan Center for Innovation, and Growth Management
2. Town Manager Monthly Report

3. Consideration of an Ordinance and Ratification to Approve an Amendment to Ordinance No. 2023-11 Repositioning the Non-Exclusive Easement Over a Portion of Parcel R610 028 000 1006 0000 for Dominion Energy's System Improvement Project - First Reading - Kimberly Washok-Jones, Director of Projects and Watershed Resilience

X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

A motion from Councilmember Hamilton, Seconded by Mayor Pro-Tempore Wood to enter executive session for the items listed on the agenda.

1. Legal and Personnel Matters Relating to the Receipt of Legal Advice Regarding Police Department Personnel (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70[a] [1],[2])
2. Legal Advice Pertaining to an Appeal of a Decision Made by the Historic Preservation Commission (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70 [a][2])
3. Discussion of Negotiations Incident to Proposed Contractual Matters Regarding the Lease of Town Owned Property within the Buckwalter Multi County Industrial Park. (Pursuant to SC Freedom of Information Act 30-4-70[a][2])

XI. ACTION FROM EXECUTIVE SESSION

Town Council took no actions nor votes resulting from Executive Session.

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Motion made by Councilmember Hamilton; Seconded by Councilmember Burden to adjourn the at 8:49PM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Tuesday, September 10, 2024